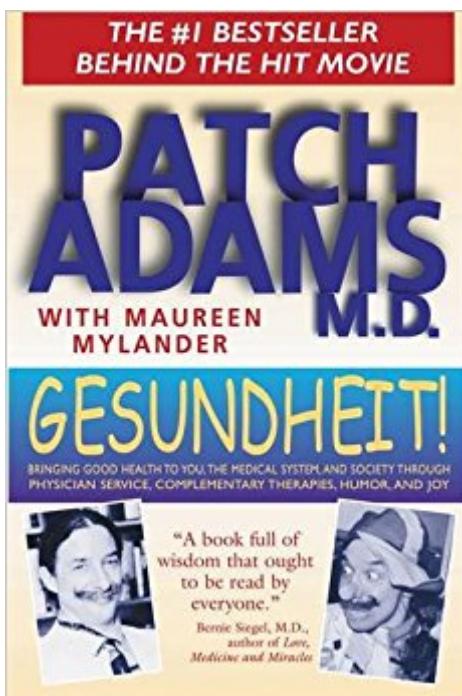


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# Gesundheit!: Bringing Good Health To You, The Medical System, And Society Through Physician Service, Complementary Therapies, Humor, And Joy



## Synopsis

The inspiring and hilarious story of Patch Adams's quest to bring free health care to the world and to transform the way doctors practice medicine. Tells the story of Patch Adam's lifetime quest to transform the health care system. Released as a film from Universal Pictures, starring Robin Williams. Meet Patch Adams, M.D., a social revolutionary who has devoted his career to giving away health care. Adams is the founder of the Gesundheit Institute, a home-based medical practice that has treated more than 15,000 people for free, and that is now building a full-scale hospital that will be open to anyone in the world free of charge. Ambitious? Yes. Impossible? Not for those who know and work with Patch. Whether it means putting on a red clown nose for sick children or taking a disturbed patient outside to roll down a hill with him, Adams does whatever is necessary to help heal. In his frequent lectures at medical schools and international conferences, Adams's irrepressible energy cuts through the businesslike facade of the medical industry to address the caring relationship between doctor and patient that is at the heart of true medicine. All author royalties are used to fund The Gesundheit Institute, a 40-bed free hospital in West Virginia. Adams's positive vision and plan for the future is an inspiration for those concerned with the inaccessibility of affordable, quality health care. Today's high-tech medicine has become too costly, impersonal, and grim. In his frequent lectures to colleges, churches, community groups, medical schools, and conferences, Patch shows how healing can be a loving, creative, humorous human exchange--not a business transaction.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Patch Adams, the movie starring Robin Williams, was a warm, humorous introduction to a very unusual man. Unfortunately, this audiobook does not provide any of the humor or warmth of the movie. Instead, Adams presents his manifesto for curing the ills of the medical profession and society at large. The abridgment is certainly long enough to get the main points across; the unabridged version gets tedious, and Arte Johnson's narration becomes grating and monotonous. We all know the medical profession in this country has problems. Adams's ideas for resolving them are as wide-ranging and, at times, as eccentric as he is. Ideas about bringing humor and joy to everyday life seem reasonable. However, it is hard to imagine doctors treating patients for free and not carrying malpractice insurance. For libraries with large alternative health sections.

ATheresa Connors, Arkansas Tech. Univ., Russellville Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"If a wacky West Virginia doctor's dream of building a freehospital comes true, he'll have a small Vermont publishing house to thank." (Olivia F. Gentile, Rutland Herald)"This book is an enjoyable, easy read that's ideal for those interested in a new view of health." (New Times, Oct 2005)The Universal movie soon to be released as "Patch Adams" starring Robin Williams was born as a book called "Gesundheit!" published by a small Vermont house and written by a doctor who dresses as a clown, doesn't charge his patients and told the architect designing his new health center in West Virginia to "make it silly," with trap doors, eyeball-shaped exam rooms and chandeliers to swing on. How did such a project find its way to print? And how did it get to Universal? According to publisher Ehud Sperling, who started Inner Traditions 23 years ago and is just now enjoying his first Hollywood sale, "Gesundheit!" was written at the suggestion of one Josh Mailman of the philanthropic Mailman family from New York, who met Patch Adams at an ersatz-hippie celebration called the Rainbow Gathering. Mailman thought people would want to read about this 6-foot, 5-inch ponytailed man who called himself "a pie in the face of the American medical establishment"--his goal is free medical care for all--and how he came to hold his unorthodox views. Mailman introduced Adams to Sperling, who found him a coauthor, Maureen Mylander, and a book was born. That was in 1983. The movie deal took place at least 10 years later, at a meeting of the hip entrepreneur invitation-only Social Ventures Network, where Sperling and Mailman met up by chance with "M\*A\*S\*H" co-star Mike Farrell, who had heard of Patch Adams at the time of "Gesundheit!"s" publication. Farrell wanted to produce the project. He optioned the book via Al Zuckerman's Writer's House for what Zuckerman characterizes now as a steal, made a pitch to Universal and secured the interest of comedy director Mike Shadyac ("Liar, Liar"). "Everyone wanted Williams," reports

Sperling, "because it was an ideal vehicle for him, but no one wanted to get their hopes up." But the clown in Adams appealed to Williams. What about the height discrepancy? "Williams is shorter, but he's very funny," Sperling says. There has been talk at Universal of donating a portion of the box office to Patch Adam's Gesundheit Institute, which is more than \$4 million short of the \$5 million needed to finish work on the grounds and building, but according to Sperling, nothing has happened yet on that front. (LOS ANGELES TIMES Sunday November 1, 1998)"Patch Adams's book ought to be required reading for patients, doctors, and ordinary mortals of all kinds. It will help us rediscover the true meaning of medical care, and it will help to heal the health care system itself. I have learned from Patch the courage it takes to be different and to reveal your wounds: behind his clownlike persona lies a great deal of wisdom, and it often falls to the court jester to speak the truth that those in power need to hear." (Bernie Siegel, M.D., author of Love, Medicine and Miracles)"At last Patch Adams, M.D. has put on paper his vision of patient-centered health care . . . a vision that has inspired so many over the years. Patch's 'crazy dream' is, in reality, the root of what good health care should be all about and too often isn't. Any health care professional who reads *Gesundheit!* will come away with a renewed sense of mission and joy about what they do." (Rick Wade, Senior Vice President, The American Hospital Association)

This book is slightly better than his *House Calls* book IMHO. It explains his thoughts on how to improve/change our medical system. Please look up my review on this book (*House Calls*). I well remember when I was growing up in the 1950's that the local docs still made - limited in scope - house calls. I vividly remember once when I was sick - maybe 5 or 6 - that the town/local doc made a house call and gave me a shot in the butt of penicillin. But then the office model took off and is far more efficient use of a MD's limited time. Patches views/opinions are interesting but not very practicable and I explain why in more detail in my Review of his other book. I would rate this book a good 8.0 to 8.5 - I would only recommend if you get it at your local library.

Great message for anyone and everyone from this physician.

An engaging, comprehensive review of the vision and life-dream of the "real life" Patch Adams, M.D. This, the good doctor's first book, gives the reader the background leading up to, and the progress of the dream made since, the 1994 Hollywood version of this man's life, which starred Robin Williams. An easy, but enjoyable and informative read for anyone curious about what this amazing doctor is doing now, what he has learned from his "pilot project" clinic, and how the dream for a 40-bed

freehospital had changed and grown over the years. A must for anyone interested in visiting the West Virginia site and working as a volunteer. A joy for any reader who, like Patch, has suffered the detriments of our current health care system, and who seeks to reform it into something that can actually heal.

Sadly I saw the fabulous film staring the late Robin Williams before I read this book. Consequently the book could not deliver the same enthralment as the film. The book was laborious to read and too bogged down in facts without much drama to be classified as a good read. This should not detract from the wonderful work the foundation performs, just watch the film instead.

Patch Adams had a great idea and did a lot of good. Unfortunately he doesn't write very well and the book drags on and on. He doesn't seem to have the confidence in his work as shown in the movie with Robin Williams and he has various people or organizations try to build a case for his work, a case he had already made.

Patch Adams, MD, is clearly one of a kind. A man with a vision about changing health care. He has many good ideas. But, many are far too Utopian for times and the systems and the people. His book is almost all philosophy. Not much for stories. Which disappointed this reader. The few stories he shared were about trips to Moscow mostly made with groups of clowns, etc. This reader thinks Adams could have gotten his message across far more effectively and enjoyably if he had practiced his own medicine, so to speak, in authoring the book. I wish him better luck next time.

I believe people over the world have to learn how to be happy, how to help each other for free. Patch Adams has some good ideas and dreams how to build a healthier world and earth. One of my favorite quote from his book: "Common Misunderstanding: Many people think that Patch says that humor is the best medicine, Patch actually believes that friendship is the best medicine!" Be happy!

gives the background of the story of Patch Adams. I understand that he was not happy about the movie treated it but if they had not done so, I probably would not have bought the book

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